

Committee: Jay Boyar, Kelly Cameron, Yen-Ju Chen, David Friedman, Grant Moy, Gabriel Nmah, Suzanne Weiss, Ben Wu

Absent: Kernan Chaisson, Nathan Finkelstein, Joy Ragsdale, Noreene Wells

Cable Office:: Amy Wilson, Andrea Gardner, Keith Watkins

Guest/s: Melissa Adams, Donna Keating, Neil Greenberger, Richard Turner

1. Call to Order/Approval of Agenda, Introduction Meeting began at 7 pm with introductions. Minutes April meeting minutes will be reviewed at a later meeting.

2. Guest Speaker RCN- Abebi Wolfe was unable to attend.

3. Digital TV Transition Discussion–Donna Keating and Neil Greenberger
Donna Keating, Acting Cable Manager, External Communications and Outreach Services

- Presented the committee with information regarding the work being done to educate county residents on the upcoming Digital Transition, solely based on information from the FCC (Federal Communications Commission) web site. They are working in conjunction with the Offices of Public Information and Consumer Protection. Target audiences are seniors, housing communities, low income, disabled, minority groups and rural. A representative from the speaker's bureau has been contacted to arrange for two seminars, one at Holiday Park senior center (Date TBD) with a booth to provide information. Five thousand brochures on the DTV Transition have been ordered from NAB (National Association of Broadcasters). Requested the representatives at the FCC to provide demonstration and directions on the installation of the set top boxes, whereby removing the responsibility from the Cable Office to provide this information to the public. A diagram will be place on their website as to how to set up the boxes and public will be notified when this information becomes available. The Cable Office website also provides downloadable information related to this topic. The NTIA (National Telecommunications Information Agency) and the NATOA (National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisors) have partnered to provide information in this effort. DTV Answers is an NAB website which also provides information. The responsibility of the County will be to answer questions on the digital transition, close captioning, and to inform residents that the coupons expire in 90 days and are not transferable, not to tell consumers which box to purchase. Information will be distributed at the following events/locations: County Fair, Town Hall Meetings, Regional Services Centers, and Libraries. Donna also indicated they were looking at utilizing the "Meals and Wheels Program" in addition to exploring the possibility of working with Health & Human Services in conjunction with their home health visits. Amy inquired about the liability of working with HHS and the Meals on Wheels Program. Donna responded HHS made this request because residents have been inquiring and it is her understanding that liability issues have been worked out.

- In discussion with the MACO (Maryland Association of Counties) Donna is requesting to have a presence at the upcoming conference in August, and is looking into using the housing fair coming up sometime in September/October time frame to answer questions and disseminate information. Media outreach being done in the form of the

show Montgomery County Comments which recently aired and another is being scheduled for September/October time frame. Sue Rogan, Consumer Protection, hosts the "Consumer Corner" on the radio and will be addressing the DTV issue.

Neil Greenberger, Legislative Information Officer, Montgomery County Council

- Addressed concerns about information being distributed to educate the public. Organizations are spending more time on marketing and less focus is being made to explain why the transition is both beneficial and necessary. The county plans to promote information using (CCM) County Cable Montgomery including promos featuring our elected officials. The question now is to figure out how to target the 20% of house holds who do not have internet access. Neil suggested using high school students as part of their community service or school project. David asked if there was any intention for the county to ask local analog stations to do public service announcements in order to supplement the work done by the county. Grant asked if it were possible to set up a phone bank. Ben suggested the idea of scheduling a town hall meeting with individuals from outside organizations who are willing to come out and speak to the issue of the digital transition. David and Kelly commented that unless people switch to cable the only individuals who will be affected by the transition are the ones who are still using over the air reception. Donna responded this is why the focus is on seniors who will probably be the hardest hit majority. Donna added that NAB initially approached the Boy Scout organization with the idea of entering homes to assist with the digital transition but this could not be done unless two adults accompanied each Boy Scout because of a possible liability issue. Amy also spoke to the issue of representation of the county, concerns for accountability and the liability involved with providing information which could be misinterpreted with setting up a phone bank. Donna responded that the county does not have intention of asking local stations for assistance in this area especially since they have CCM. Donna responded about the idea of a town hall meeting that it could be done but there is a concern for attendance in addition to the funding necessary to put on a production of this type. Neil indicated that a town hall meeting would be a good idea but funding for this type of event has already been allocated.

4. Cable Office: Amy Wilson, Acting Cable Manager, Administration and Franchising Services

Attached: May Cable Office Report

- The committee thanked Amy for her information and requests updated customer service information on the providers as soon as available, probably next week. She may arrange for Margie Williams to attend the May meeting. The committee again requested that the Council staff person attend the CCAC meeting in June prior to the MFP meeting. Amy will pursue this. Suzanne again requested that Amy ask the MFP committee members if they would attend the June CCAC meeting, or if they would prefer to meet with committee members at any other time

There was no PEG report provided

5 & 6. Suzanne Weiss, Committee Chair

- Requested an update on Effective Competition. Amy responded there was no update at this time but the longer this takes the better off we are. Suzanne inquired about whether it was true that the providers are again raising rates
- Spoke to concerns regarding closed captioning issues and the programming of Verizon and Comcast boxes. She has been requesting this information from Comcast and still has not gotten a response, along with questions regarding the web information for PEG channel, which is missing channel names and programming. Amy suggested the cable office would assist in getting responses to provider related questions and that Keith could help track both the questions asked and the responses.
- Suzanne indicated that vacant committee seat was advertised after our inquiry and asked for an update on the applicants and interviews. Keith responded he had not yet received the applicant information but in the past only two committee members took part in the interviewing process. Suzanne suggested that we had always included a third person .Kelly and Mark offered to interview the candidate, along with Jay. Keith will set up interviews as soon as possible.
- Keith request that committee member reimbursement forms be submitted to the cable office at or before the June 25th meeting since the county year end is June 30. Amy concurred and suggested that reimbursement should be submitted quarterly.
- Suzanne inquired if the cable office had heard about problems related to the power supplies from Verizon. Keith has not received any complaints to this effect. Suzanne has inquired to Verizon on replacement power supplies sent out to their customers in advance of a failure.
- Suzanne raised the question as to recess over the summer. A motion to not hold scheduled meetings in July and August was made by Mark and passed by the committee. It was agreed that the committee would meet as needed during that time.

7. No public comments

8. Adjournment • Meeting adjourned at 9:10 pm

- Next committee meeting scheduled for Wednesday, June 25th 7 pm, location at COB to be determined.